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Mr. ALLEN's
ELECTION SERMON.
May 30. 1744.





Magistracy an Institution of CHRIST upon the Throne.

A

S E R M O N

preached in the Audience of

HIS EXCELLENCY

William Shirley, Esq;

THE HONOURABLE

HIS MAJESTY'S COUNCIL

AND

House of REPRESENTATIVES

of the Province of the

Massachusetts-Bay in NEW-ENGLAND,

On the Day of Election of COUNCELLORS for said
PROVINCE.

By *James Allen, V. D. M.*

Pastor of the Church in Brookline.

*Magistratus custos est utriusq; tabulae, veram religionem plantare debet
et dilectionem erga proximum, eliminare quicquid istis contrarium sese
offert ————— Ne putent se ad otium et ad opes corradendas
vocari in eam dignitatem — sed uno oculo Deum, altero subditos
respiciant.*

Aret. de Magistr.

Justitiae ferendae causa Reges esse creatore.

Bod.

BOSTON in NEW ENGLAND:

Printed by *John Draper*, Printer to His Excellency the GOVERNOUR
and COUNCIL, for *Daniel Gookin* in Cornhill. 1744.

At a Council held at the Council-
Chamber in BOSTON, upon Thursday
the Thirty-first of May, 1744.

Voted,



THAT JACOB WENDELL and
JOSEPH WILDER, Esqrs. be a
Committee to give the Thanks of
this Board to the Rev. Mr. *James*
Allen, for his Sermon preached
Yesterday before the General-Court,
and to desire of him a Copy thereof
for the Press.

Copy Examined,

per J. WILLARD, *Secr.*





MAGISTRACY

An Institution of CHRIST *Upon the Throne.*



ISAIAH vi. 1.

*In the Year that King Uzziah died, I saw the LORD
sitting upon a Throne, high and lifted up.—*



IS the just observation of the
contemplative *Psalmist*, that the
heavens declare the glory of GOD,
and the firmament sheweth his
handy-work ; and that the earth
is the LORD's, and the fulness
thereof, he hath founded it upon
the seas and established it upon the floods. Now if
GOD had wisdom to contrive, and power to effect
these beautiful globes, he has an indisputable right to
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the government of them, and is certainly qualified for it: Nor may it be thought, that it does not comport with his majesty, or is an obstruction to his quiet and happiness to concern himself in the government of the world. The notion of *Lucretius* is contradictory to that idea of the divine being, the oracles of truth furnish us with. To suppose, that, when he had made the world, he took no further thought or care, but left it to shift for itself, implies one or other of these absurdities, that he either made it for no wise design, or through some mistake in its formation it did not answer his original purpose; like an unskilful artificer, not having framed his work according to the model of it in his own mind, throws it by, and does not care what becomes of it: But as it is a most wise production, that has no blotches or blunders in it, but in all its parts exquisitely done, and every way correspondent to the design in the eternal mind, there can be no reason upon this account why he should not govern it. And then, as he is a most wise agent, and all his works the effects of counsel, and consequently had some wise design in making it, 'tis absolutely necessary for him to govern it, in order to accomplish that design; and how can he act more like himself, and display the glory of his perfections better, than by preserving the several ranks of beings, in that harmonious and admirable order they were placed in at first? or why should it be thought below his dignity to regard the works of his own hands? or can it be any difficulty to an omniscient and omnipotent being to attend such a number of things as the government of the world includes? To imagine this is to limit

limit the most high, debase his excellencies, and bring him down upon a level with his creatures, and to think that because we find our minds and powers so narrow and limited, that a small number of objects bound our thoughts and cares, therefore the inspection of so many must be a burden to GOD himself. It becomes us better to confess and adore with the *psalmist*, than to object against providence, *The LORD reigneth, he is clothed with majesty.—he is the king of all the earth.* But then, as to the *form* of that government which he exercises, it is a subject so sublime and mysterious that we can say but little of it; and therefore having asserted that *the LORD reigns*, he presently adds, that *clouds and darkness are round about him. His way is in the sea, his path in the mighty waters, and his footsteps are not known.* But tho', the *arcana imperii* are an height we can't reach, a depth we can't fathom, yet we must think there is a great deal of reason and righteousness in them; and that a most beautiful scene would open to us, if we were let into all the secret springs of the divine government, and could trace the various steps and gradation by which every design is accomplished.

Good men, in all ages, have been so well satisfied with the wisdom, goodness and equity of providence, that they have acquiesced in it, *rejoiced in tribulation*, triumphed when surrounded with greatest dangers, and thick and black clouds have impended over the church or state, and threatened its subversion.

It is from our professed belief of his all-disposing providence, and just sense of our absolute dependance upon it, and of our duty to acknowledge GOD in all
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our ways, and implore his direction in an affair of the highest importance, and wherein the interest of the province, both civil and religious, is so nearly concerned, that we are now assembled in this house of worship.

Thanks be to the LORD upon the *throne*, that our *civil liberties* granted by the ROYAL CHARTER are continued, under the auspicious reign of king GEORGE the II^d ; and that this day is again revolved upon us, wherein the *heads of our tribes*, are met together to select and constitute, by the consent of the governour, one main branch of our *legislature*.

And whereas your *Excellency* and the *honourable Board* have called me, however unworthy, to declare the counsels of heaven to you, upon this occasion ; *stirring up your pure minds, by way of remembrance*, I desire to speak with humility and fear, as becomes the oracles of GOD, and with fidelity to my great LORD and MASTER, knowing that I must give an account.

When the angel of the LORD appeared unto *Moses* in a flame of fire, out of the midst of a Bush, he said, *I will now turn aside, and see this great sight* ; so let us all now turn aside, for a while, and lift up our eyes above the hills, above the firmament, and behold with the wondring prophet the LORD *sitting upon a throne high and lifted up*.

The prophet *Isaiah* was of noble birth, of the royal family, and *nephew* to king *Uzziah* he here speaks of, as the *Jews* relate. And he was of a *noble spirit*, and not exceeded by any that prophesied before, or after him in clearness and abundance of visions,

visions, and revelations, especially concerning the MESSIAH ; and in a curious and polite, lofty and majestick stile.

The first words of my text spread a melancholy gloom upon the face of rulers. *In the year that king Uzziah died.* Tho' a great man in *Israel*, and a good man, yet he died. Neither grace nor grandure can exempt from death. Princes, who are in a qualified sense the *breath of a people's nostrils*, derive their breath from GOD ; and when it pleases him, the sovereign arbiter of life, *their breath goes forth, they return to the earth, and in that very day their thoughts perish.* Whatever distinction GOD, in his providence, has made betwixt one man and another, in civil respects, they are all in death's account equal. King *Uzziah's* reign was long and prosperous, and *Judah* was happy under it ; but he must not live always : It is the prerogative of him, whom the *prophet saw upon the throne*, to be the KING ETERNAL.

It was in the year of this king's death, that *Isaiab* had his vision. GOD, at sundry times, and in divers manners, spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets ; sometimes by dreams, sometimes by an audible voice, and sometimes by visions, as here to *Isaiab*, and afterwards to *Ezekiel* by the river *Chebar*. It is not to be supposed, that the eyes of the prophet were so strengthened by a supernatural power, as that he saw into the third heaven, at so vast a distance ; but he had a representation of the light & glory of it, conveyed to his mind by some sensible images, and of the LORD sitting upon a throne there, not like king *Solomon's*, a throne of ivory, and overlaid with the

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purest

*purest gold, but a * sapphire throne, transcendently bright and glorious, above all competition or controul, and commanding over all other thrones.*

There are several important articles which might come under our consideration here, as the heads of my present discourse :

As,

- I. *The person whom the prophet saw thus exalted and dignified.*
- II. *The import of his advancement, or the ideas it serves to convey to us.*
- III. *His qualifications for his exalted station.*
- IV. *The extent of his dominion.*
- V. *The nature and form of his administration, &c.*

But I must confine myself to the two first of these heads.

I. Then, *I am to consider who it is that the prophet saw upon the throne.*

It could not be any *meer* man, or an *angel*, assuming a human form. It is the place of the angelical orders to stand about the throne, and minister unto it ; and this is honour enough for them. It was a *divine person*, the SON OF GOD, the *root* and the *offspring of David*, the *bright and morning star*. Some think it was the *first* of the divine persons who was exhibited to the prophet, and that we read of a like appearance of his, Dan. vii. 9. *I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool, his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire, &c.* But I rather think

* Ezekiel i. 26.

this to be understood of CHRIST, who is called the *ancient of days*, because of his immutable and eternal divinity, and that it is a mistake to assert that the FATHER, or the HOLY GHOST ever appeared in such a low and diminutive form ; but the SON often occasionally did so, for he was to be incarnate, veil his glory, and dwell among us. Thus he appeared to *Abraham* ; and in the same shape, upon the burning mount, at the giving of the law ; and, in the like manner to *Isaiah* ; for so the vision is explained, John 12. 41. *These things said Isaiah, when he saw his glory and spake of him :* All which appearances were undoubtedly designed to prefigure his assumption of the nature of man, and its subsequent advancement to the throne of GOD, the authority of a prince and a judge there.

Whether he assumed the form of that individual body he appeared in afterwards, is an inquiry more *speculative* than *practical*.

To set upon the throne of his FATHER was the glory he had with him before all worlds, and which he had a *natural* right to : And it is also the glory the FATHER promised him as the reward of our Redemption, *Isaiah liii. 12. Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong, because he hath poured out his soul unto death.*— *Psalms xvi. 11. Thou wilt shew me the path of life, in thy presence is fulness of joy, at thy right hand are pleasures for evermore.* In the prospect of this recompence he engaged, suffered the cross, and despised the shame, and is now thus *highly exalted above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come, and hath put all things under his feet.*—

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The apostle *John* long since beheld him in the same place and posture, *Rev.* 5. 1. with all the shining myriads about him, and praising of him.

It is then an *exalted* JESUS the prophet saw, and I am now speaking of. *He that was made lower than the angels, is now crowned with glory and honour.* And such an high priest the christian has, *who is set down on the right hand of the throne of the majesty in the heavens.* I hope you will all hear the report with pleasure. I am sure, if thro' grace we arrive at the vision that comes after, it will never tire us. CHRIST upon the throne is the attractive object of every eye, and engages every heart, angels behold and wonder, and faints adore the risen GOD: His throne is guarded with legions of blessed spirits, who with united voices proclaim his excellencies and shout his praises. They did not disdain to sing his birth to humble shepherds, and now with joy celebrate the glories of his exaltation. And the redeemed and perfected spirits unite in the consort, *Rev.* 19. beg. *I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluja, --- for the LORD GOD omnipotent reigneth.* Thus the saints are joyful in glory, the children of Zion are joyful in their king, they sing with loud *Hosannah's* to the son of *David*, the vaults of heaven eccho with songs of praise, and the triumph shall never end: *Blessed are they that dwell in thy courts, they will be still praising thee.* Thus the LORD JESUS CHRIST, the eternal SON of GOD, from a low and humble state on earth, is advanced to the highest seat of dignity, and sustains a post of the utmost grandure in the heavenly world: He sets upon a throne of majesty, that commands reverence and honour from us who are now worshipping at his feet, and from all intelligent beings.

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He sets upon a throne of grace, to which we may may come boldly. The consideration of his majesty might make us afraid to draw near and speak to him : This effect it had upon the *prophet*, when he beheld the glory of the LORD, *Then, said I, wo is me, I am undone* : But he is exalted upon a *mercy-seat*, with a rainbow (an emblem of mercy) about his head : This *invites* the sinner to him, *even to his seat*, to lay open his wants, complain of his grievances, and implore his compassion and help. He sets upon a throne of GRACE to give out *pardons* to humble supplicants, and communicate *blessings* to the poor and needy ; and he is as ready to give as we can be to ask them.

He sets upon a throne of *government*, giving out his laws, and demanding our obedience, and observing what regards we pay to them, that he may reward, or punish us accordingly : For the throne of *judgment* is also his ; and at his word we either stand or fall.

Having thus spoken of the *person*, the prophet saw upon the throne of glory, high and lifted up :

I proceed to consider,

II. *The import of the vision, or the ideas it serves to convey to us.* And it certainly includes all that is great and good. The subject is truly *sublime*, and full of *mystery*, and we may never expect to comprehend it while in our present state of imperfection, but the advantages of it to us, are surprisingly great and various.

CHRIST *upon the throne* in our nature, what can be more delightful to hear and contemplate? And how great and boundless the expectations it raises in us ? He is now ready to all acts of care about his people,
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they are ever under his eye, and within reach of his arm ; he is a *sun* to enlighten, a *shield* to defend, and a *fountain* to supply them : What more is needful to encourage the active christian, to revive the drooping faint, or to astonish the daring sinner ? CHRIST's advancement is the believer's assurance, that he shall live and reign with him in that blessed world, where *they shall hunger no more, neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat ; for the lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters, and GOD shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.*

To be particular here,

I. This exaltation of CHRIST speaks the *transcendant dignity* and *excellency* of his *person*, that he is worthy of the throne he sets on, and qualified for all the great designs of his advancement. It would be a dishonour to the wisdom of GOD to place him there, if he was a mean person, or an insufficient ruler : It speaks his *joint-interest* in the FATHER, the *eternal head* of government, and *oneness* with him in *nature* and *glory* : For GOD never did, or will receive any other into the throne, to share the dignities and prerogatives of it : To *which of the angels said he at any time, set thou at my right hand ?* Nothing like it was ever spoken to any of *them*. They are the *first* and *purest* productions of divine light, above man in his original state of integrity and perfection ; but infinite descents below the SON of GOD, and pay their *joint homage* to him in the lowest postures of humility and reverence. Their wisdom is folly ; their power, weakness ; and their holiness, impurity, compared with his. This vast disproportion they themselves do readily acknowledge, and are ashamed and blush at
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the *stupidity* of some men, in debasing him almost to a *level* with *themselves* : The excellency of CHRIST infinitely transcends all *angelical* perfection ; some faint rays of this glory were visible to his disciples, *Thro' his veil of flesh* : We beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the FATHER,— John i. 14. But how little of it appeared to them, in respect of what the prophet saw, when HE was *sitting upon his throne*, with all the *cœlestial* inhabitants about him, and sparkling in all the bright rays of the FATHER's glory, and his own. The prophet Ezekiel had a like vision of him, cloathed with robes of dazzling light. But after all, we may not suppose that the *fulness of glory* was visible to either of them : It was not the splendor of *unveiled* majesty, but the *likeness of his glory* ; the *fulness* of it, is *light inaccessible* and cannot be viewed by mortal eyes. Glorified spirits have much brighter visions of him. The soul in its exalted state shall *see the king in his beauty*, all the perfections of that infinitely great and glorious nature in their brightness and purity, the effect whereof will be the highest admiration, ardent love, and an eternal spring of universal praise.

2. It speaks the *utmost grandeur*. To ascend a throne is the *very top of preferment* ; flesh and blood can rise no higher : The most aspiring tempers do but aim at this, and have no notion of a superiour advancement ; and it is but here and there one, that can grasp the *royal dignity*. This honour was conferred upon CHRIST at his *ascension*, according to the prediction, Psal. 47. 5. *GOD is gone up with a shout ; the LORD with the sound of a trumpet ; sing praises to GOD ; sing praises to our king, for he is the king of all*

all the earth : The LORD reigneth over the heathen, he sitteth upon the throne of his holiness, the shields of the earth belong unto him, he is greatly exalted. He promised but little grandeur when he was stretched upon a cross, the sport of men, and the mark of violence. Man thought the meanest honour too much for him, but in GOD's esteem all the glory of heaven was not too great : When he was arraigned at the bar, he intimated that he should by and by ascend a throne, and head an empire comprehending both heaven and earth, and they *should hereafter see him coming in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory, attended with all the holy angels*, to take vengeance upon his enemies : They entertain'd the report, (as we may imagine) with a *disdainful* smile ; thinking it no better than the wilds of *enthusiasm*, for so mean a person to challenge so exalted honours : He was born in a stable, begun his life with brutes, and ended it with malefactors ; but now is the LORD of hosts, principalities and powers : oh surprising change, and beyond all imagination to them by *whose wicked hands he was crucified and slain ! here* he was despised of men ; *there* he is adored by angels : *here* in contempt and mockery he was crowned with thorns ; but *now* he wears the crown of glory : *here* he was nailed to a cross ; but *there* he sets upon a throne high and lifted up : *here* he groaned under the weight of sin and the curse ; *there* he triumphs : *here* he had no form or comeliness ; but *now* he shines in all the beauties and glories of the god-head, and has the most profound respect and veneration paid him by the infinite numbers about him.

3. It assures us of the *accomplishment of our redemption*. The FATHER that chose him to this work, knew him equal to it. He did not lay the help of his perishing creature upon a broken reed, but *upon one that was mighty*. The burden was too heavy for an angel's shoulders, but the SON was able to bear it, he could both fulfil the *precept* and suffer the *penalty* of the violated law ; and so discharge the debt we owed to inflexible justice. The FATHER, by an audible voice from the excellent glory, testified his acceptance of what he had done : And the SON appeals to him, when leaving the world, that he had glorified him on the earth, and finished the work he had given him to do ; and, according to the eternal compact between them, supplicates for that glory he enjoyed before the world was, which was as readily given him, as it was asked for, as the *psalmist* by spirit of prophecy declares, *I have set my king upon my holy hill of Zion*, Psal. ii. 6. He raised him from the dishonours of the grave, and placed him at his own right hand ; and the grandeur he now possesses, is an incontestible evidence, as of the *dignity* of his *person*, so of the *sufficiency* of his *sacrifice* ; for if he had not accomplished the work he engaged in, but it had come imperfect from his hand, he had not been thus advanced, but left eternally under the power of death. His resurrection assures us, that the *whole debt* was paid, the thundering law silenced, and the justice of GOD has no further demands to make upon us. We have nothing to do now in *way of satisfaction* ; but our whole work is to *believe in, adore and love* a once *crucified*, but now *enthroned* JESUS. He is gone to heaven, as he came from it on our account, and is making intercession for trans-

gressors, *pleading from a throne* for us, with arguments rolled in blood, and therefore prevalent. And how numerous, how rich and comprehensive are the blessings conveyed down to us, from the fountain of love and mercy, by his means? And how much greater those we are the joyful expectants of? What is it that GOD *reconciled* is not willing to do for us? If we miss of pardon and grace here, salvation and glory hereafter, it is our own fault. The *apostle's* argument is strong and convincing, that seeing GOD *spared not his own SON, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him freely give us all things?* Rom. viii. 32.

4. It intimates to us, that he is *open to the view* of all the cœlestial inhabitants. A Throne is the most *publick* station, and the person upon it affords an advantage for a *general* notice; no one is debarred from vision, but *every eye sees him*. Here the believer has sometimes a *glimpse* of his glory, and his love thro' the thick medium of ordinances; but this is *personal* and *secret*: but *there* he exhibits himself to all at once; they behold with *open face* the *glory of the LORD*; and as the sun sometimes forms its likeness in a cloud, so they are *transformed into the same image, from glory to glory*. There's no need of any artifice, of taking the advantage of rising ground, or of climbing the *sycamore-tree* to behold him, for he is not hid in a throng, nor is the vision transient, but he is fixed upon a throne, and always to be seen. And with what pleasure and admiration do they behold him? The company of *prophets* and *apostles*, the noble *army of martyrs*, the *general assembly of believers* and *church of the first-born*, will afford an additional joy;

joy ; but it is JESUS *the mediator* that fills the soul with delight and satisfaction, and is infinitely more to it than all heaven besides. It is the *favour* he demands for all his redeemed, that *they may be where he is, to behold his glory* : And this is the believers ardent wish, and perpetual desire ; and the grant of it is sure. It is given in *promise* to them, *They shall walk with me in white, for they are worthy ; they shall sit with me on my throne.*

5. And I now come to what I chiefly design. It denotes his actual government over all things. A Throne speaks *dignity* and *authority* : and all power is his both in heaven and on earth. The Government of the world is upon his shoulder ; and his name wonderful, counsellour, the mighty GOD, the everlasting Father, the prince of peace, of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end ; upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it and to establish it with judgment and with justice, from henceforth even for ever : These are some of the magnificent and lofty expressions of the holy men of GOD concerning the dominion of CHRIST, speaking as they were moved by the HOLY GHOST ; and after this pompous manner the prophets have all along described the glories of his kingdom.

The ancient heathen confined the dominion of GOD to the *supreme* heavens, over the *angelical* orders, and would not allow that he had any concern in the affairs of this *lower* world, the government of kingdoms, states and empires ; but the oracles of truth instruct us better. It is true, that is the most noble part of his dominion, but he is said to look down from heaven ; not as a bare spectator of the actions of men,

but as their LORD & JUDGE, that he may *render to every man according to his works*. Fortune or chance has nothing to do, takes no place in the world, except in the absurd imaginations of men: The prophet *Ezekiel's* wheels don't move & roll at random, but under the direction of the *cherubims*. The government of CHRIST is a discreet & wise authority, which none can justly fault: The wisest *politicians*, in their most deliberate acts, are often guilty of *mistakes*; and, when they see the *event of things*, wish they had ordered otherwise: But there is no imprudence or injustice in CHRIST, in his whole management. Some of his dispensations have the face of *absolute sovereignty*; but it is because our faculties are not strong enough to see into the amazing depths of wisdom contained in them: Others may seem to us *disorderly* and *confused*, tho' there is accountable *reason* for them. As to one event and another, we may say and admire as Rom. xi. 33. *Oh the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of GOD! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!* Our Lord CHRIST, in the execution of his REGAL office, is represented as mounted upon a *Cherub*, riding upon the heavens, and flying upon the wings of the wind: And the wonders of his providence are expressed in terms most sublime, both as to his acts of *terror & vengeance* upon his *enemies*, and of *help* to his *friends*: When he arises out of his place the *earth trembles*, the *foundations of the hills are shaken*, because he is wroth; there goes a *smoke* out of his *nostrils*, and *fire* out of his *mouth devoureth*. When his people are in distress, He *rideth upon the heavens for their help*, and in his excellency on the *skie*; and the *stars in their courses fight their battles against Sifera*. The *clouds are his chariots*, from them he discharges

discharges his *thunders*, to the terror and amazement of mankind; and by them he *waters the earth*, and makes it verdant and fruitful, adorns it with the beautiful prospects it now affords us : And at his pleasure he shifts the scene, changes the face of the earth, strips it of his gay attire, and puts every thing around us in a dying posture, to remind us that we ourselves are so : *By the breath of GOD the frost is given, and the breadth of the waters straitned, and he seals up the hands of every man* : And then he operates under the earth, where no eye of man can penetrate, or his hand reach, and makes the *pillars of the world tremble* : He shakes it with the same ease that we can move a *finger*, or wave a *feather*, either from *natural causes*, or by an *immediate act of power*, we can't tell *which*, nor *how*; at this our hearts tremble and are moved out of their place.

The great and sudden changes in *publick* affairs ; the revolutions of states and kingdoms, which surprise and astonish us, are the effects of a designing mind, of an alwise cause. The various conditions and circumstances of men, that some are prosperous, others adverse ; some rich, and others poor ; some in dignity, while others are low and level with the earth ; is not the result of meer chance, but the design of CHRIST, and for *wise ends*. The *beauty and glory* of the *whole* consists very much in the *variety of its parts* : And the *qualifications* of men, for the different *stations and parts* they are to act, in the rank of rational beings, is from CHRIST the *fountain of wisdom*. Thus CHRIST *upon the throne* is the LORD of all, and has *authority and power* sufficient to *govern all* by himself, and without the instrumentality of *men or angels* ; but he is pleased to make use of *them* in the conduct.

conduct of his affairs both *civil* and *ecclesiastical*. As to his government by *angels* we know but little of it: They are invisible agents in the services they do us; but his rule by *men* is evident and indisputable; for he has said, *Judges and officers shalt thou make in all thy gates which the LORD thy GOD giveth thee throughout thy tribes; and they shall judge the people:* and the civil ruler is called *the minister of GOD*. The distinction of *king* and *subject*, *rulers* and *ruled*, is not the contrivance of designing men, but of *divine ordination*: 'Tis CHRIST upon the throne that has appointed *magistracy*, that advances *men* to superiour or subordinate offices, and accomplishes them for *government*; and has declared to us for what *end* he doth it, and accordingly what the *people* over whom they preside may expect from *them*, and they from *him* as they behave and manage in their respective *spheres*; and also what regard he will have us pay to *them*.

And here I shall be particular as the occasion leads me.

1st then. *Magistracy is an institution of CHRIST upon the throne.* This is an assertion that stands in the strongest light in the sacred oracles. The *wisdom* of GOD thought it highly necessary for man in his apostate condition, whatever it might have been if he had kept his primitive state, and retained his original purity and glory; and therefore imposed it not as a *burden*, but a *blessing* upon mankind; for what is or can be more beneficial to the world? 'Tis the very life and soul of *humane society*; without it, what but perpetual *discords* and *contentions* might be expected? *Oppression*, *injustice*, and the most flagitious *enormities* would soon lift up their heads and grow rampant,

rampant, and the whole earth become a *theatre* of the most *bloody tragedies*. An *ungovern'd society* of men would be no better than a *herd of savage beasts*, worrying and devouring one another : To prevent this *confusion*, GOD has instituted *civil government* to be a guard upon our persons and lives, and defend us from the violence and injuries we might be exposed to from men more *crafty* and *powerful* than ourselves.

It was an unhappy *juncture* when there was no king in *Israel* to restrain the boisterous lusts and headstrong passions of the people ; but every man did that which was right in his own eyes ; *libertinism* and *licentiousness*, *idolatry* and a *practical contempt of GOD*, his laws and worship, broke in like a flood upon the nation, and exposed them to the angry *resentments* of heaven. Where all authoritative & coercive power is taken off, men will soon think that *where there is no law, there is no transgression*, and make it evident that it was not so much the dread of *hell*, as of a *halter*, that restrained them from the greatest villanies.

A *common-wealth* without government is like a body without eyes, which stands exposed to a thousand mischiefs, but can defend itself from none of them : To take away government, would be to deprive mankind of all that is *civil* and *sacred*, and to reduce a beautiful world to a meer chaotical state of darkness and confusion ; but a well-ordered *common-wealth* how beautiful and glorious to behold ! And how happy the *BRITISH constitution* ! and how justly may it be the admiration and the envy of the nations about it, with a KING upon the throne, swaying the *sceptre of righteousness*, with his *nobles* about him, and *officers* under him, in their several degrees of subordination ! herein bearing some little and faint resemblance of the
prophet's

prophet's vision of the LORD sitting upon his throne, surrounded with his ministers, the holy angels, who are celebrating his glory and serving his government : Thus the sun, the fountain of light is placed in the centre, with the stars and planets in their respective orbs, and different degrees of magnitude, revolving about him, and all contributing to the benefit of our system. But supposing, that government had not been of divine institution, but mankind had been left intirely to their own liberty, there is no doubt but they would soon have been so fully convinced of the absolute necessity of it, that they would not have continued long without it. *Anarchy* is such a state as no reasonable man would choose, there being no manner of safety in it, either of life or property. It was an ancient custom among the *Persians* to abrogate the laws of the kingdom, shut up their courts of judicature, and silence the oracles of justice upon the death of their sovereign, and every man was left to his own empire for five days together ; in which time such horrid things were done, and outrages committed as to convince them, by sad experience of the want of a king, and the necessity of laws. It was the just observation of the roman orator, *Nihil tam aptum est ad jus conditionemque naturæ, quam imperium, sine quo, &c.* Nothing is so adapted to the state and privilege of humane nature as government, without which it is impossible that families, cities or nations should subsist, yea without it the race of mankind would be soon extinct.

There is doubtless a certain *æconomy* in the world above, amongst the bright intelligences that encompass the throne of GOD, and the LAMB : This seems to be plainly intimated by the distinguishing titles given them of thrones, dominions, angels, arch-angels, cherubims,

bims, and *seraphims*: There is a sort of *regimen* in the *starry* regions, in their higher and lower scituations and degrees, without which composition, they could not properly be called an *army*: And there is something of this to be found amongst the *irrational* tribes; the *bees*, as *Virgil* and others have observed, have their *king*, and the *cranes* their *leader*; and they observe their nocturnal watches in disposed orders. Thus *magistracy* is an *ordinance* of CHRIST, the alwise GOD and supreme LORD of the world: And seeing he has constituted it among men, he certainly demands our practical acknowledgment of it; and who would be loth and backward to make this concession, since we are all beholden to *government*, for *order*, *peace* and *religion*? We are certainly worthy of nothing but confusion, if we are ungrateful to GOD, for regular *government*: Now we may *dwell* quietly in our *houses*, or *sit* under our own *vines* and *fig-trees*, and *none* to make us *afraid*: Now the *wealth* we obtain by *honest* industry, may be insured to posterity: Now we may be build *temples* for the worship of GOD, without danger of having them pulled down, by *sacrilegious* hands; and adore the GOD that made us, without being molested with *mutinies* and *uproars*: Now we may enjoy our *sabbaths*, and have constant opportunities for our souls, in the free use of all those means, whereby immortal spirits are trained up for the heavenly world: For these things, *bless* we GOD, and *honour* the KING.

But in asserting *civil government* to be an *institution* of CHRIST, I don't intend that any particular *form* of it is so; for this, the *apostle* expressly says, is an *human ordinance*. It was never the design of GOD, that any *one* model should *universally* obtain amongst mankind; for if it had, he would

undoubtedly have expressly revealed it, and not left the world thus long in the dark ; for *divines* of the greatest *note* and *eminence*, have never been able to find out any such *intimation* of his pleasure in *holy writ* : And if he had preferred any particular *form*, it is no ways probable that he would have permitted that of the *Israelites*, his favourite people, to have been so often changed, as we find it was no less than five times : It looks as if these several alterations of their *constitution* were permitted, on purpose to convince the world that every *form* was alike indifferent to him ; and that he left it to the prudence of every nation to make choice of *that*, which best suited their own *tempers* and *circumstances*, and that if any people found *their's* defective, the *fault* was their own if it was not reformed. And *this* being the true *origin* of *civil government*, it is a very natural inference that *rulers* derive their authority under GOD, from that *constitution* to which they belong ; for it is absurd to suppose, that *kings* and *governours* are sent down immediately from *heaven*, with their *commissions* in their hands : And since the *power* of the *civil ruler* flows from the *constitution* he is under, the natural extent of it is limited by the maxims of doing that, which is *just* and *right* to all under that *constitution*.

2. It is CHRIST upon the throne that advances magistrates to their respective offices. Every one's calling and station in the world is of GOD, he has appointed the *time* of our coming upon the stage of action, the part we shall manage, and when we shall retire and make room for others. Thus *Moses* was called to conduct *Israel* his people ; but the priesthood was settled upon *Aaron* : *Nebuchadnezzar* was his servant to

to humble the pride of the *Jews*; and *Alexander* was raised up to overthrow the *persian* monarchy. One is designed to wield the sword, another to hold the plough; one to advise as an oracle of policy, another to execute. *The powers that be, are ordained of GOD, and no man taketh this honour to himself*: The thrones of earthly princes are his; thus it is said of *Solomon*, that he sat upon the throne of the LORD as king, in the room of *David* his father. Promotion comes not from the east or west, north or south; does not drop down from the clouds, or spring out of the earth, nor is blown into men's hands by the wind; but *GOD* is the judge, he putteth down one, and sitteth up another; by him kings reign, and princes decree justice; by him princes rule, and nobles, even all the judges of the earth.

There have been some fanatics, that, in the strongest terms, have denied the divine right of civil rulers; and asserted that no man's conscience was bound to a submission to them, and to oppose their authority, was no immoral act: of this stamp were the *Manichees*, the *German Anabaptists*, and other enthusiastick sectaries since, who, under a pretence of setting up the throne of *CHRIST*, have been for subverting the thrones of kings, as if they were diametrically opposite as *GOD* and *Belial*, as *heaven* and *hell*; but this is to confront the sovereignty of the most high, who in the plainest terms assures us, that the higher powers are from him, and have the impress of divinity upon them. But then this is, in a mediate manner, for there is no title to dominion by *GOD*'s immediate designation, as it was in *David*'s case, and his successor *Solomon*; no prophet or vision is now to be looked for, and there is no king or ruler upon the earth, that, if he pretends to such a right to govern, is able to make

out his *claim*: It is by the *mediation* of men, that *rulers* are *constituted*, from the *king* upon the *throne*, to the lowest *officer* under him, and nothing but ordinary *providence* is to be expected in it. The apostle *Peter* calls *government*, *αρχὴν κατὰ θεὸν* an ordinance of man, not because it is introduced by man without a *divine mandate*, but because it is instituted for the *benefit* of men: The *civil ruler* is expressly called *GOD's minister*, Rom. 13, and it is there said, that *there is no power, but of GOD*; and therefore he demands the *loyalty* and *subjection* of the *christian Romans* to their *authority* in things *just* and *right*. It is observable that *Nero*, that monster of *tyranny* and *cruelty*, had the *imperial dignity* at that time, and yet as he was advanced to it by the *providence* of *GOD*, he must be submitted to, and obeyed in all *lawful* things. “ The *usurpation* of *power* and the *abuse* of it, are “ not of *GOD*, for he is *not* the *author* of *confusion*, “ or of *sin*, but the *power* itself is his. *

Having thus said, that *magistrates* are appointed by *CHRIST* the great *LORD* and *head* of the *political body*, I shall now proceed to consider,

3. *The design of their constitution, the duty incumbent on them, and what GOD himself, and the people over whom they preside, justly expect from them.* Now the great end of *government* is the good of the *subject*: This is the very design of *CHRIST* himself, in his rule over us; it cannot be any-ways to advance himself, and his own interest; for being infinitely happy in himself, he doth not want us, nor is he capable of receiving any advantage at all from us; but it is that he may do us good, and qualify us for the enjoyment

* Mr. HENRY in *Loc.*

of himself, which is the supreme *dignity* and *happiness* of the *rational creature* ; that he may rectify the disorders of our natures, restore his *image* bright in us, and raise up to himself *beautiful temples* out of the *ruins* of *apostacy*, and mould us into that *divine form* which is requisite to prepare us for the heavenly world and our everlasting abode there : To this end both the doctrinal and preceptive part of his religion naturally tend ; and in this, his *providential dispensations* do all concur & unite ; and if this gooddesign of his government over us is not reached, it is our own fault.

Now in this the GOD of heaven is a *pattern* to our earthly GODS ; and it is their duty and glory to *imitate him* herein ; for in nothing can they resemble him more than in concerting measures, and laying out themselves for the good of others : They are stiled *nursing fathers*, and as such must be as extensively beneficial as they can, to all under their care, protect the innocent, right the injured, encourage the diligent, suppress disorders, punish the disobedient, defend the poor and needy, the widows and fatherless from fraud and violence ; and how little does that *magistrate* comport with his character, who does not make *these* his governing design. *Civil power* is not to be looked upon as an empty, insignificant *name*, a meer sound without substance : The *sun* in the heavens was not placed in his exalted sphere, merely to be gazed at, but to afford light and heat to the earth, for the production of *grain* and *fruit*, *herbs* and *flowers*, for the delight and benefit of mankind : And the more *exalted stations* persons sustain, so much the greater *care* and *business* lies upon their hands, that instead of indulging themselves in ease and delicacy, they are to *watch night and day*, and be always *contriving* and
active

active for the prosperity and welfare of their people : But they should be especially concerned to promote the *honour and interest of religion* among the people, by good *laws*, and their good *example* : It is the *main* qualification of a *governour*, that he endeavours to make his subjects *good men* and *good christians*, obsequious to the laws of GOD, and loyal to the *crown* of heaven : And those of *supreme dignity* should exercise special care, that the *truths* and *ways* of GOD are not reproached by the *ill principles* and *practices* of those in *subordinate* powers : This was the good resolution of the pious king *David*, Psalm ci. 3, 6. *I will set no wicked thing, or person, before mine eyes, I hate the work of them that turn aside, it shall not cleave to me : Mine eyes shall be upon the faithful of the land.* Those only he would search for, and promote, that would design and act for the *honour of GOD*, and the *publick good*, and not those that were grasping after preferment from *selfish* views, to enrich or aggrandize themselves by impoverishing their subjects : As they rule by CHRIST, they should rule for him, and make it evident by their good lives, that *authority* and *religion, grace & government*, are not inconsistent things. May they for ever be conjunct and inseparable in the *legislative* powers of this land.

“ We think it well becomes our *high place* and
 “ *station*, said that excellent Emperor *Theodosius*, to
 “ give admonitions and injunctions to our *subjects* con-
 “ cerning *religion*. ” Again says he, “ We do no-
 “ thing in the heat of *war*, or the cool retirements
 “ of *peace*, but consult and order how the *good subjects*
 “ of our empire may truly worship GOD, and spend
 “ their days in his service. ” This was a noble *speech*;
 and it is the glory of a *christian governour* to say and
 do

do likewise, to advance the *religion* of GOD our SAVIOUR, to be a *guardian* to his *churches*, a *patron* of *virtue*, a *promoter* of *learning*, and to shine in all the *graces* that adorn the *christian*: These are the most splendid ornaments in a *prince's* crown, attractive of the divine love, the *delight* of angels, and the *admiration* of men: Such a magistrate is a *man after GOD's own heart*, and may depend upon the divine conduct in his affairs *personal* and *political*: This will command the most profound reverence, and the highest *love* and *honour* from his people: Then will these apostolick *canons* come with a peculiar emphasis, and they will see the admirable beauty of them: *Be ye subject to every ordinance of man, for the LORD's sake; put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers; to obey magistrates, &c.* Indeed a people under the *influence* of *religious* principles and strongly impressed with a sense of their duty to GOD, and rightly distinguishing betwixt the *man* and the *office*, will obey a *bad* magistrate in things not in themselves unlawful: Thus the *christians* were observant of the imperial edicts of *Commodus*, *Phoras*, &c. but it cannot be thought to be with that *freedom* and *alacrity* as to a *good* ruler. The *apostle* speaking of the intention of magistracy, says, that *rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil*. They should appear like the *HOST* of GOD *formidable* and *terrible*, the *cherubims* that guarded the tree of life with the flaming sword of justice in their hands, to execute wrath upon the bold and daring criminals, and to suppress vice and immorality, in all its forms and complexions, and to drive it if possible out of the land: *Wickedness* naturally tends to deprive a people of the divine smiles and protection, and to bring down distressing calamities

ties upon them. The prosperity of a *province* infallibly depends upon the favour and blessings of heaven, but if GOD be gone from us, what can be expected but a series of woes and judgments? Such a people cannot subsist long, but must inevitably sink into disgrace and ruine, which to prevent should be the care and endeavour of the *civil ruler*. The apostle adds --- *a praise to them that do well*; that do their *own proper business*, that confine their zeal and activity within their own limits, and *wherein they are called of GOD*, there abide, and are faithful; these shall have the countenance and protection of those under whom they serve.

But its time that I proceed to the next particular to be considered, *viz.*

4. *The qualifications of the civil magistrate, or what he must be according to the direction of CHRIST, to answer the design of his constitution, and that he may discharge with fidelity, and to divine acceptance, the important trust reposed in him.* It is not every man that is fit to govern, how much soever he may think himself qualified for it: The weight of government is too heavy to be laid upon every one's shoulder, they must be *able men* to surmount its difficulties, and wade thro' its emergencies. There may be many *excellent qualities* in a man, and yet he may not have a turn for government: The great & glorious characters by which rulers are known & distinguished in the sacred oracles, convey to us such sublime ideas, as cannot be in any measure answered, except by here and there *one* of an extraordinary genius: Sometimes they are dignified with the title of GOD's, Exod. 22. 28. *Thou shalt not revile the GODS.* GOD himself stiles them so; and how much does it *magnify* their office, and what reverence

verence and honour does it call for from us? They are stiled the *lights of a people*. Thus the royal David was the *light of Israel*: They are lights for splendor, counsel and comfort; and what greater title can be given of a mortal man? or, what more is spoken of GOD himself? *GOD is light*; wisdom and knowledge, power, purity and all perfection is comprehended in it. Sometimes they have the character and style of *shields of the earth*, Psal. xlvii. 9. *The shields of the earth belong to the LORD*; i. e. *magistrates*, the protectors and guardians of a nation, are *dependant* upon GOD: And it is a great blessing to a people to have *such shields*, especially when it may be said of *them*, that they *belong to the LORD*; that is, not only *constituted by him*, but *devoted to him*, employed for his honour, and his people's interest: Then he is greatly exalted, when princes and governours and inferiour officers exert their power to promote the kingdom & interest of CHRIST, & to defend their people from insult & oppression. I say, when we reflect upon *such titles* of the *civil magistrate*, as they suggest to us something very superiour, and are almost apt to raise our thoughts of *him* as another *sort* of being, that approaches nearer to *divinity* than mankind generally does, so to expect from him something proportionably great and good. It was *Jethro's* advice to *Moses*, to *provide out of all the people, able men, such as fear GOD, men of truth, hating covetousness*, and place *such* over them to be rulers.

To be particular here,

I. *A principle of true grace living and reigning in the heart, is the first and best qualification in a magistrate.* It is the just observation of one, that *no principles, but those of religion, are sufficient to form*

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a great man; all other accomplishments separate from this, will loose their lustre and glory : It is *piety* that makes the face of a ruler to shine. This is his brightest ornament, as *holiness* is the most orient pearl in the crown of heaven : All the bright ornaments of Greece, or all the Roman dictators and consuls were not so great & honourable as the christian magistrate cloathed with the robe of holiness, & resplendent in the image of GOD : All the eloquence and oratory of Cicero ; or all the great achievements and conquests of Cæsar, for which they have been so much celebrated, don't render them worthy of that esteem, love and honour which is justly paid to a christian Governour ; who, by the charmes of his good example, the noble conquest of his own lusts and passions, his holy zeal for GOD, and faithful endeavours to advance the best interests of his people, is render'd worthy of the highest honour. GOD himself esteems and honours such a ruler, and will honour him in the regions of the blessed : He now shines as the sun when he goes forth in his strength; and shall hereafter shine as the brightness of the firmament in the world of light and glory.

The GODS of a people should adorn their exalted stations with *sobriety*, *righteousness* and *sanctity*. They are, as one expresses, lights upon a hill visible to all, and they cannot transgress, but like the eclipse of the sun, every one observes it, and the smallest defect in them obscures the whole orb of their virtues. The Roman Optimates were so to behave in all things as to make their conduct approved by every good man, and worthy the imitation of all : Their Censors and Prætors were to inspect the morals, and correct the vices and extravagancies of the people. It was given in charge by the GOD of Israel, to the electors of the empire to chuse the person that he should nominate

to be their king ; and to the king so elected, to act under the influence of religious laws in his administration, Deut. 17. 18. *It shall be when he sitteth upon the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write him a copy of this law, and it shall be with him, and he shall read therein all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the LORD his GOD, that his heart be not lifted up, and that he turn not aside from the commandment to the right hand or to the left :* And to excite him to this, and to induce to practice what he read, he is told the advantage that his religion would be unto him, viz. that *it would prolong his government, and entail a blessing upon his posterity.* Secular dignity lays no foundation for a blessed hope, translates no man to the coelestial paradise : 'Tis only holiness that qualifies for happiness, the vision of CHRIST upon the throne, and the rivers of pleasures that flow from it. The sanctifying work of the divine spirit upon the soul, and his testimony to it, in concurrence with our own spirit, is that alone which can give us that sweet peace which passeth all understanding, a divine calm in a dying hour, and afford us a comfortable prospect of future glory. It is not the coat and character of a minister of state, that will be any advantage to him in the great audit-day, that will secure him from the animadversions of the supreme JUDGE, or render his doom any thing less severe : It won't make in his favour to plead, that he has been a ruler over men, and sustain'd such a post. 'Tis nothing but our graces, and good works, the genuine product of them, that will recommend us to the divine acceptance : If our station and business be high, if we have not the hearts of sincere humble christians, we shall have but the greater ignominy, and fall at last. Our earthly GODS must

stand at the *same barr*, and be judged by the *same rule* with their people; and without an impression of the *divine character* upon them, they shall have the doom of the *wicked* and *slothful servant*, and be excluded the blisful presence and kingdom of GOD for ever. We see then the *obligation* upon magistrates to be *good men*: 'Tis absolutely necessary to themselves and their own *comfort* in the *present*, and *happiness* in the *coming world*; and it is necessary to their people, to form them to religion and virtue, by the shining examples of it in their own persons.

2. *Great knowledge and wisdom, are essential qualifications in civil rulers.* Piety alone won't do; for then every *good man* would be qualified to rule, which it is certain he is not; but they must be *wise* and *understanding* men, and like the accomplished ruler of the *Jews*, who conducted his people, as in the *integrity of his heart*, so with the *skillfulness of his hands*: How can the grand intentions of government be served, or how can government itself be secured from contempt, when it falls into weak and unskillful hands? If *the blind lead the blind*, there's no need of an oracle from heaven to foretel the consequents. *Oculum cum sceptro*, was the *Egyptian* emblem of government. "It is the same frantick madness, says Dr. *Henry More*, to exile *prudence* out of the *affairs of state*, as to exclude *reason* out of the *mathematicks* and *philosophy*."

It bodes well to a people when it may be said of them as Ezek. 27. 8. *Thy wise men, oh Tyrus that were in thee, were thy pilots.* Men skilled in the art of *navigation*, and could direct their brave fleets in times and places of danger, their safety and prosperity consisted
very

very much in having such wise men in so useful and important a service. Magistrates are the *pilots* of a people, and therefore must be men of great wisdom and prudence; an ignorant pilot is a *solecism*, and to what purpose is the office of a magistrate without ability to execute it? A weak and giddy head will soon cause a staggering body, and a ruined state: The political house must inevitably fall that has the slender reed, instead of strong pillars, to support it. *Knowledge* and *wisdom* are the two eyes of the magistrate; with one he views the people in their constitution, tempers and outward circumstances, what are their dangers, and from what causes they arise, and what may be done to prevent them; with the other he forms such schemes, and applies such remedies as are proper to the case. Who then is sufficient for these things? where is the man that answers the character of an accomplished ruler? he is like *Elibu's* interpreter, *one among a thousand*. Indeed almost every man thinks himself qualified to set at helm, guide and govern publick affairs; but this is because he is both a stranger to himself, and to the difficulties of government.

3. *Courage is a necessary and excellent quality in a magistrate.* Knowledge of the state of the province, and wisdom to conduct its affairs to advantage, will be to but little purpose without *courage*: These in conjunction won't fail to distinguish a man amongst those of his own rank and order; but if he possesses the former, the latter being wanting, it may be of ill consequence, as it may deter him from speaking or acting freely, in any matter that lies before him. If the head is crowded with sublime and noble ideas, and these ranged in most beautiful order; 'tis *courage* must

must draw them out into act and exercise, and render them serviceable to the publick. A cowardly magistrate is like the timorous *bare* in a lion's den; the frown or check of a great personage will frighten him out of his conscience, and obstruct the execution of justice. The *Athenian* judges held their courts in *Mars-street*, to shew that they had *martial* fire, tho' cloathed with *Apollo's* robes.

4. *They must be just men.* The GOD and governor of the world is *just*, and in this a pattern to rulers, who should endeavour to be *righteous* as he is *righteous*. This is what he expressly requires of them; *the GOD of Israel said it, and the rock of Israel spake it. He that ruleth over men must be just.* Justice obliges the magistrate to deal fairly and righteously between man and man, to protect the innocent, and right the injured. There is *an iniquity to be punished by the judges*; and *there is a reward for the righteous*, which the *minister of justice* must see distributed, as he would not bear the sword in vain. The *just* ruler will take care that righteous laws, and none but such, are imposed upon the subject; and when made, that they are enforced with proper sanctions, and duly executed according to the regards that are paid to them. The *Egyptians* were used to picture their judges without hands, as some other nations have done without eyes, that they might not be guilty of *bribery*, which *blindeth the eyes of the wise*, and *perverts the words of righteousness*. The opposite to this, viz. *injustice*, is repugnant to the laws of GOD, and the precepts of christianity; and the unjust man is *abhorred of the LORD*: The apostle's words are shocking, and one would think sufficient for ever to deter men from the practice

practice of this sin, 2 *Thess.* ii. 12. So that *injustice* is a sin that is inconsistent with the fear of GOD, or a principle of grace in the soul : 'Tis impossible that there can be sincere and undissembled *piety towards GOD*, where there is not *righteousness towards men*. 'Tis one of the *main* strokes in the character of a citizen of *Zion*, that *he walketh uprightly*, and *worketh righteousness*.

5. And finally. *They must be men of a publick spirit* ; seeking the good of all their people, and not to enrich themselves : The *avaritious* magistrate is compared by the prophet to a *wolf* ravening the prey, and aiming at nothing but to get dishonest gain, *Ezek.* 22. 27. When it may be said of a magistrate, *thine eyes and thine heart are not but for covetousness*, what but mischiefs to the publick, oppression and every sort of villany may be expected from him ?

Thus I have considered the *qualifications* of *civil rulers* ; or what they are to be and do, according to that power they have received from CHRIST, and that relation wherein they stand. And when rulers are thus qualified, it is from CHRIST : He is the fountain of all good, and distributes his blessings as pleaseth him ; and they are his gifts and graces that adorn the magistrate, and in which he shines.

I am now to consider,

In the 5th and last place. *The regards which CHRIST upon the throne, who has constituted civil rulers, will have us pay to them*. Now we are to honour them as temporal fathers ; to support the dignity of government by paying them their *just tributes* ; to pray for the divine blessing upon their persons and ad-

administrations ; and to yeild a voluntary and chearful subjection to them in all their lawful demands. The debt of *honour* to them is a moral precept, doubtless couched under the law of the *fifth* commandment. *Honour the king*, which may include *inferiour officers*, is also an apostolick charge : This honour is to be expressed by outward gestures, and by defending and preserving their character against such *malcontents* as make too free and bold with it, *speake evil of dignities*, and reproach their administration ; and by rendering them that *tribute* or *custom* which is proper in their exalted stations. And then, as we should pray that they may be under the *divine influence* and *conduct*, from the KING upon the throne to the *lowest officer* under him, so we should submit to every ordinance of man for the LORD's sake ; the apostle's words are awful Rom. 13. 2. *Whosoever resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of GOD ; and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation* : It intends lawful authority ; for it is no fault at all, but a duty to disobey, if these *injunctions* are opposite to the laws of GOD : It is an eternal maxim of truth, that GOD must be obeyed rather than man.

But I may not enlarge upon these things, but pass to the use of what has been spoken in some *inferences*, omitting others.

USE I. How great and incomprehensible is this mystery, CHRIST upon the throne, wearing the crown, and swaying the sceptre there. 'Tis his humanity that is the subject of all this honour. As GOD he was not capable of advancement, but has a natural right to the throne, and to all the grandeur, properties and powers of it : But that *flesh and blood* should be so raised and dignified

dignified by being united to the SON of GOD, is a most surprizing project of unsearcheable wisdom, and comprehended by none but GOD himself; the apostle calls it *μεγα μυστηριον*, that GOD was manifest in flesh, — and recieved up to glory. There can be no greater disproportion than between infinite & finite, GOD & man, the CREATOR & a creature; and yet these are so conjoined as to constitute one person. What strange paradoxes are these, viz. That the mighty GOD is a Child born, and the everlasting FATHER, a Son given; that the eternal was made in time; and the immortal, mortal; and yet continuing eternal, infinite: Oh ineffable display of wisdom! The result whereof will be the admiration and praise of its glories, in an endless duration: To unite a rational soul to a lump of clay, or to join a clod of earth to the sun, is the effect of a boundless strength; but the union of the divine and human nature in the person of CHRIST, is an effect of wisdom and power infinitely beyond these: The angels of light & glory are not herein comprehensors, but are prying into it; and it will be the matter of their eternal inquiries.

USE II. We infer, That CHRIST upon the throne is to be praised for his royalty, and for all the displays of his goodness and mercy to ourselves and others, to our king and nation, and to our land. 'Tis the employ of the happy myriads that guard his throne, to ascribe blessing and honour and thanksgiving to him: The prophet Isaiah beheld, and heard the services thus paid to him, in an universal consent and harmony; and with such a strong affection and fervent zeal, that, as the visionary disciple represents it, their voices were loud as thunder; and also melodious as harpers, harp-
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ing with their harps. And this should be our employ while here on earth; *we* should bear a joyful part in the *new song* which the *angels* sing; *we* should celebrate him as our *victorious deliverer* from the united powers of sin and hell; and as the *actual bestower* of all those blessings upon us, to which the comfort of the present life is owing, and on which our future and everlasting happiness depends; *we* should often reflect upon the *many* and *various instances* of his goodness to us; and mention, with pleasure, *his great goodness towards the house of our Israel, which he hath bestowed upon them,* from our beginnings unto this day; and how from a *small number*, we are increased to a *great multitude*; our *religious and civil liberties*, our *magistracy and ministry*, our *churches and colleges*, are the rich & invaluable blessings of CHRIST upon the throne; and which loudly call for our grateful acknowledgements *this day*. And now, *Blessed be the LORD GOD, the GOD of NEW-ENGLAND, who only doth wondrous things, and blessed be his glorious name forever; and let all the people say, Amen.* We have great cause to be thankful for the good government we are under, both as to the KING and *ministry* at home; and those in *immediate authority* over us. And we would take this most publick occasion to express our gratitude to the MOST HIGH, for the *remarkable preservation* of the life of our KING, and his royal son the Duke of Cumberland, in the late battel at Dettingen. And our obligation to gratitude is greatly increased by his deliverance from the late designed *French invasion*; which if it had succeeded, what dire calamities would have been consequent upon it, the nation would have been an *aceldema*, a *field of blood & rapine*, and reduced to *slavery*: Thanks be to the LORD upon
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*the throne, that has not given the nation over as a prey to her adversaries ; but has broken their purposes, diminished their forces, and made them unable to accomplish their mischievous devices. Let us now adore and sing with Moses and Israel, after the destruction of the Egyptian host, Thou didst blow with thy wind, and scatteredst them, the sea covered * them, they sunk as lead in the mighty waters ; Who is like unto thee, Oh LORD, --- fearful in praises doing wonders. And now may GOD yet and long preserve the lamp which he hath ordained for his anointed ; protect and defend him from all secret attempts and open violence, and may he be wise as an angel of GOD to conduct the great affairs of the kingdom in this cloudy day ; and may he succeed in the present war, and his just arms prove victorious ! and I doubt not but that it is the united voice of all the sons of New-England, GOD save King GEORGE, and speak well of his servant, and of his royal house, for a great while to come.*

USE III. Doth the Lord CHRIST reign, let us all stand in awe of him, and not in a slavish fear and dread of any of our fellow-creatures. He that is great and exalted above all, is greatly to be feared, his power is infinite ; whereas the power of man is limited and can extend no farther then GOD permits. When his people the Jews were dejected by the numbers and threats of their enemies, he rebukes their fears, and tells them how absurd and impious it was to be in such dread of dying men, Isai. 51. 12. --- *Who art thou that thou shouldest be afraid of a man that shall die, and of the son of man, that shall be made as grass ; and forgettest*

* Some Hundreds of them.

the LORD thy maker? The royal *psalmist*, with a vigorous faith, triumphs in GOD, the GOD of his salvation, when *the wicked*, even his enemies came upon him to eat up his flesh; and nobly resolves, that *though an host should encamp against him, his heart should not fear, and tho' war should arise against him, in this he would be confident.* CHRIST upon the throne, is the LORD of HOSTS; and whatever mischievous intentions our enemies, by sea or land, may have against us, he can protect us, who is *the LORD strong and mighty, the LORD mighty in battel*; and he will do so if we make him our friend. Let us then fear and reverence him, and we are safe; he *will hide us in his pavilion*; --- *he will set our feet upon a rock, and lift up our head above our enemies round about us.*

USE IV. Hath the LORD upon the Throne appointed civil rulers for the good of his people, they should then *endeavour to comport* with the design of their advancement. *My honoured Fathers*, CHRIST in his providence has constituted you the present guardians of our lives, religion and properties; a very great and important trust is herein committed to you; and the eyes of GOD, angels and men are upon you to observe you in the management of it.

To excite you then to fidelity herein, be pleased to consider, and bear upon your minds these three things, viz. *Who* it is that you act for: That your *time* is *limited* and *short*: And, the *account* you must quickly give up to the great and impartial JUDGE of the world.

Who it is you act for; and that you are the ministers of CHRIST, the LORD of heaven and earth; and as you act *by him*, it should be *for him*: His interest and

and glory, and the good of this people, should be your governing design in all your *debates* and *resolves*, *acts* and *laws*, that you pass : And if it be so, you may expect the *divine presence* with you, and that *GOD himself will stand in the congregation of the mighty, &c.* And then you may expect that you will be the happy instruments of our peace and prosperity, and of the growth and flourishing of religion among us ; then *truth will spring out of the earth, and righteousness will look down from heaven.*

Again consider,

That your *time of service* for CHRIST and this people is *limited* and *short*, This is a melancholy motive, but should be a quickning one, to our rulers, and to us all, to be active and diligent in the service before us ; as our LORD himself was quickned in his work from this consideration. 'Tis a dying world we are in; *our days on earth are as a shadow, there is none abiding.*

Where are all the sons of fame we read of in past ages ? And, where are those that once were the lights of *our Israel*, our sheilds and our glory ? Sad experience has often told us that *earthly GODS die like men.* How many shining examples of wisdom, learning and piety have we seen adorning the *chair* and the *council-board*, which our eyes shall see no more ? Where are the great names of DUDLEY, STOUGHTON, BURNIT, and others ? Or, Where are the honourable gentlemen of a lower sphere, the WINTHROPS, HUTCHINSONS, SEWALL, or the late honourable Col. DUDLEY, an instance fresh in our minds ? *Vixerunt, sed mortui sunt ;* they are all gone ; and you, gentlemen, that succeed them are dying men : Your great and splendid *titles*, your exalted *stations* won't exempt you a moment from

from *death* ; but you that frame laws for others, are alike subject with them to the law of mortality. *Death* strains no compliments with earthly GODS : The man of *honour* must die as well as the *clown* or *beggar*; death will strip him of his purple attire, and cover him with cold earth. Place yourselves then, *gentlemen*, at the end of this beautiful scene, and passing out of flying time into the world of spirits ; think and say with the royal psalmist in the midst of his wealth and honours, *Thou hast put, LORD, a measure to my days, and my substance is as nothing.* Such reflections as these would be serviceable to excite you to diligence and fidelity, in the discharge of your duty, in your respective posts of honour and service.

Again consider,

The *account* you must quickly give up to the great and impartial JUDGE of the world. And how will magistrates, negligent of their duty, dare to hold up their guilty heads, before the flaming tribunal above ; when they shall be charged not only with their own *personal* sins, but with all *other's* sins, perpetrated by their contrivance ? Such loads of guilt will expose them to a most intolerable doom and punishment in the *other* world.

Suffer me now to address your EXCELLENCY, the honourable BOARD, and the honourable house of REPRESENTATIVES, particularly, in a few words.

May it please your EXCELLENCY, whom the LORD upon the throne has seated in the *first chair* of dignity and *power* over us ; and we acknowledge and adore his kind hand of providence in it, and that your EXCELLENCY's administration has been to general acceptance

acceptance among us ; which affords us ground to hope that it will be your desire and endeavour to make us happy, by a vigorous prosecution of every thing within your sphere, that is requisite to promote the religious and civil interests of this people.

YOUR EXCELLENCY has the honour of being placed at the *head* of a *province*, that has been as remarkable for piety towards GOD, and loyalty to the *crown*, as any one in the *British* dominions : A *province* that has been the delight and the care of heaven, and in a very signal manner smil'd on and prospered ; that it may be said, ---*Who is like unto thee, O people, saved by the LORD, the shield of thy help, and the sword of thy excellency.* And therefore, SIR, your tender regards for us, and endeavour to make us still a more flourishing and happy people, will be an offering highly acceptable to the LORD. A great opportunity is put into your hands to do us good ; and we would hope it is because GOD *loveth his people* that he has set your EXCELLENCY over us in such a day and time as this : And that you will be the means of delivering us from the perplexing difficulties we are involved in, particularly by an *unhappy Medium*, uncertain as the wind, and fluctuating like the waves of the sea, and which lies at the mercy of every one to rise or sink at his pleasure ; thro' the *unrighteousness* whereof the land mourneth ; and the cries of many are going up into the ears of the LORD of *Sabaoth*.

I would also humbly ask your EXCELLENCY's smiles upon the COLLEGE, the chief seat of learning among us, the glory of NEW-ENGLAND ; and especially at such a time as this, when learning is despised and vilified as a thing prejudicial to the church and state ; whereas it is the honour and safety of both.

I would further humbly beseech your EXCELLENCY to use your best endeavours and influence at *Home*, to secure to us the many valuable *privileges* granted us by the ROYAL CHARTER : Your EXCELLENCY's concern and regard for us in these things, will further endear you to us ; and as it will render you worthy of the highest esteem, love and admiration of your people while you live, so your name will be mentioned with honour after your recess. With this consideration, *Thetis* comforts her brave son in *Homer*, that though he should be short lived, yet he should continue himself in the admiration of posterity ; by this means, tho' you seek not glory to yourself, yet you shall obtain a good report, and your memory shall be blessed, when the memory of the wicked shall perish. But alas, what and how little is this compared with that honour, which CHRIST upon the throne will confer upon you, as a recompence to your fidelity in his service, and which infinitely transcends all the honours of this passing world, and shall last for ever.

I conclude with my earnest wishes, that the best of blessings may descend & rest upon your EXCELLENCY's person & family to the period of a holy and happy life ; and that you may be late transmitted to the blessed regions of immortality and glory above, *Amen*.

Permit me now to apply myself to the honourable COUNCIL, and the honourable house of REPRESENTATIVES.

Gentlemen,

Thro' the good hand of our GOD upon us, you are met together to day to choose one branch of our legislature. Now there are two things that ought to govern you in your election : One is, the ability or
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fitness of the person you vote for, that he is a man of good knowledge and wisdom, and a man of integrity ; if he is defective in these, he is certainly destitute of the essential qualifications for government. The other is this, In your choice have a *principal regard* for the *glory of CHRIST* upon the throne, and the *good of your Country* ; not to please men, but GOD ; not to serve a party-spirit ; not to gratify any one's ambition or humour ; not from a contracted selfish principle : I hope, *gentlemen*, you will detest such low and sinister designs. Be pleased to think with yourselves, before you cast your *vote*, Will it be an act *pleasing to the Lord CHRIST*, that I hold up my hand, or give my vote for such a man ? What is the *principle* that governs me in it ? Is it because I think him the most capable, and best disposed to serve the publick ? Or have I something else in view ? Let not *prejudice* or *affection* turn the scale ; and such a man be neglected or left out, because he is not in such a *scheme* or *party*, tho' otherwise well qualified ; and another take place that is less worthy, because he has such a turn of thought, or is likely to serve such a design. It was once the complaint of a wise and political head, *I am not able to bear this people myself alone* ; and it was good policy (and soon became sound divinity) which *Jethro* gave him, *to take wise men, and understanding, and known among the tribes*, and place such to be rulers. Never did the circumstances of this people call for more of the spirit of *wisdom* and *knowledge*, *compassion* & *integrity*, than at this day : When the tide serves, the wind blows favourably, and all things make for the voyage, a less degree of skill may possibly suffice ; but it requires an *artist to steer in a storm*.

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And, *honour'd Sirs*, after the affair of this day is over, and the several *branches* of the *legislature* come to act in concert, it is to be desired, that you may all approve yourselves what by *profession* and *character* you are, the *servants of the Lord* JESUS CHRIST ; a title which no man has any cause to be ashamed of, and which no *angel* or *arch-angel*, but is fond of ; and that you manifest your *love* and *loyalty* to him, in a *resolute* and *vigorous opposition* to every thing that tends to *obstruct* his interest, and the flourishing of religion in the truth and purity of it among us ; --- And in a solemn and reverend regard to the DAY, the *house* and *worship* of GOD, and that a proper care be taken to prevent the great and scandalous disorders that some are chargeable with in these respects. I am sensible there are good and wholesome laws provided, to oblige all persons to *attend* the publick worship, and to prevent *unnecessary travels* upon the SABBATH ; but how little regard is paid to them ? They are every day trampled on, and in the open face of some in authority, and yet there is little or no notice taken of it : This is *an iniquity to be punished by the judges* ; but if the civil officer *neglects his duty*, the whole land becomes guilty and must suffer for it, for there needs nothing more to make a sin *publick*, than that it is connived at by those, in whose *power alone* it is to suppress it.

To draw to a close, Let us all *practically acknowledge the regency of CHRIST*, and *submit* to all *claims* and *demands* upon us. Our duty herein is too evident to be disputed, and the consequent advantage of it is a dignity and felicity beyond all expression, thought or parallel. HEAVEN, with all its charms
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and delightful glory, will then be ours: After a short run of service, we shall be admitted into his temple above, where our eyes shall see the KING, and behold the glory which the FATHER has given him, and *be changed into the same image, from glory to glory*: And as *one star differs from another star in glory*, so the rewards of blessedness shall be proportion'd to the degrees of our services here, and the honour done to GOD by them. Let these considerations inspire us with courage and resolution in the service of CHRIST; and let them be supporting considerations to us under all the sorrows of the present life. Here the *believer* is in armour and battel with the united powers of sin and hell, which furiously attack him; and he is almost worn out with the long and tedious conflict; and here he meets with numberless crosses and contradictions. Happy they, that are arrived at the heavenly world, and got above the reach of every thing that is grievous: *Blessed are the dead, that die in the LORD*: There the soul rests as in its *proper centre*, and desires nothing more than what it enjoys. But *where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear*? CHRIST upon the throne has power enough to condemn & punish them; and will exert his power, as for the *salvation* of his willing people, so for the *destruction* of all his enemies. The sinner shall be shut out of his reviving presence, & have no part in the honours of his throne, or the joys that flow from it: They that now refuse submission to his *easy yoke*, he will hereafter break with his *iron rod*; and the *opposers of his person*, shall be the *victims of his justice*, and the everlasting monuments of his *wrath and vengeance*. Sinners are apt to forget CHRIST in his exalted state; they look rather upon his past life, his low and mean condition, and are fearless of any

harm from one so degraded : They slight his threats, & seem to question his ability to execute them, but they will feel the dismal effects of them, to their everlasting confusion. — *Who hath ever barden'd himself against GOD, and prospered ?* He can crush the daring rebel with greater ease than we can the feeble worm : To allude to Job 41. 20. *Out of his mouth goeth a flame ; when he raiseth up himself, the mighty are afraid. — He is a king over all the children of pride.* There is not any creature *that has an arm as GOD ; or, that can thunder with a voice like him ?* What is the chaff before the strong wind, or briars and thorns to the raging fire ? No more is the sinner in his hand : He that triumphed over all the powers of hell, when set in battel array against him, can easily conquer the sinner when he presumes to enter the lists with him. He decks himself with majesty and excellency, and arrays himself with glory and beauty ; he casts abroad the rage of his wrath ; beholds every one that is proud, and abases him ; looks upon him, and brings him low, and treads the wicked under his feet ; he girdeth himself with strength unto battel, pursues his enemies and overtakes them, as he did the *Egyptian* host, in their pursuit of *Israel*, neither doth he turn again 'till they are consumed. Sinners are but plotting mischief against themselves, and paving the way to their own destruction, when they are regardless of his laws, and trample his authority under their feet : They may think they act wisely for themselves ; but they shall find it otherwise, repent their choice and upbraid their folly when it is too late, and they shall come to *drink of the wine of the wrath of GOD, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation ; and shall be tormented with fire and brimstone, in the*
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presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the lamb. This, Oh sinner, will be thy fate unless thou art wise betimes to make thy peace with the SON of GOD. 'Tis to be earnestly wished, that every poor and perishing soul would be persuaded to submit to CHRIST, accept him as his LORD, open his heart, and invite him to come in, and be willing to let *sin* and *self*, and all, go to make room for *him*. And let us all express our *loyalty* to CHRIST by our *submission to our civil rulers*, who bear the title of GODS, and are invested with something of *his* authority. He requires us to *render to all their dues*, and *to be subject to the higher powers for conscience sake*: If we do these things and *render unto GOD the things that are GOD's*, and *to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's*, then we shall enjoy that blessed calm in our own breasts, which arises from a sense that we have done our duty, while we live, and shall have an happy translation after death, from a world of sin, of snares and sorrows, to immortality and peace, happiness and glory, with GOD and CHRIST above.

To conclude, Let us all unite in fervent supplication to GOD *upon the throne*, for his blessing upon the *province*, That he would pardon all the sins of it, according to the greatness of his mercy; and reform every disorder among us: And, that the *hope of Israel* may be our GOD and SAVIOUR, and not as a stranger in our land, or a way-faring man that turns aside to tarry but for a night; but that he would be always in the midst of us, and in this day of *war and battle* be as a *wall of fire around us*, and *appoint salvation to us for walls and bulwarks*: That he would bless all orders and degrees of men among us; and make our
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officers peace, and our *exactors* righteousness : And, that the affairs of *this day* may be over-rul'd to his glory and the best good of this people : And particularly let this be your united supplication, my *fathers* and *brethren* in the ministry, which was the original design of your *convention* upon this *anniversary* occasion.

And now, May the G O D of peace and grace be with us, and do for us, and for this whole people, exceeding abundantly above all that we are able to ask or think ; and may our hearts be perfect with the LORD our G O D, all our days, and may it be well with us for ever ; for the sake of JESUS CHRIST, to whom with the FATHER, and the blessed SPIRIT, be ascribed, as is most due, all honour and praise, might, majesty and dominion, both now, henceforth, and in eternal ages.

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